



NEW MUSIC AT RICE

*A program of works by
guest composer*

JOAN TOWER

and by

KARIM AL-ZAND

and

KURT STALLMANN

Friday, January 23, 2009

8:00 p.m.

Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

***Rain Waves* (1997)**

for violin, clarinet, and piano

Joan Tower

(b. 1938)

Kenneth Goldsmith, violin

Michael Webster, clarinet

Jon Kimura Parker, piano

***Pattern Preludes, Book 1* (2005)**

for solo piano

Karim Al-Zand

(b. 1970)

- 1. Moderately; smoothly (after Bach)*
- 2. As quickly as possible, chirring*
- 3. Slowly; delicate thrumming (after Chopin)*
- 4. Very swiftly; restless, agitated*
- 5. Slowly; lyrically (after Debussy)*
- 6. Quickly; vibrant, full of life*

Tali Morgulis, piano (guest)

***Dear Miss Lia* (2009, Premiere)**

for solo performer with electronics

Kurt Stallmann

(b. 1964)

Kurt Stallmann, performer

***Trio Cavany* (2007)**

for violin, cello, and piano

Joan Tower

Cho-Liang Lin, violin

Norman Fischer, cello

Jeanne Fischer, piano

The reverberative acoustics of Duncan Recital Hall magnify the slightest sound made by the audience. Your care and courtesy will be appreciated. The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.

PROGRAM NOTES

Rain Waves Joan Tower

Rain Waves (for violin, clarinet, and piano) was commissioned by Michigan State University for the Verdehr Trio. This work explores the motion of a wave form. Starting with a pointillistic "rain"-type pattern, the notes float upwards and downwards in increasing intensities. In the less "staccato"-like and more flowing sections, there is a sense of a "wind" pushing the notes into longer and wider arched patterns – perhaps like the undulating sheets of rain created in a light southern tropical rainfall.

Rain Waves was written in 1997, and is dedicated to the Verdehr Trio in admiration of their unfailing support of the music of our time, and their devoted efforts to give a composer's new work a "life" through their worldwide performance tours and recordings.

– Note by the composer

Pattern Preludes, Book 1 Karim Al-Zand

"Pattern" pieces abound in the piano literature, pieces constrained by a single idea (usually a rhythmic or textural ostinato) through which a composer expresses a narrowly focused thought. Patterning is especially well-suited to preludes, which are by convention short, concise, and circumscribed. Most of the patterns in these six preludes are immediately identifiable: a repeated-note motive in no. 2; asynchronous cascades between the hands in no. 4; and a gesture bouncing between interlocked hands in no. 6. In addition, three of the pieces give a nod to other famous preludes in the piano repertoire. No. 1 is a gloss on what is likely the most famous prelude ever written, Bach's *Prelude in C Major* from the *Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I*. Within an innocent-seeming arpeggio, Bach skillfully intertwines several rhythmic patterns, something exploited in my paraphrase. No. 3 takes its cue from Chopin's Op. 28 No. 4, which every student of harmony knows (and which a professor of mine once called the epitome of "creeping chromaticism"). No. 5 was written as a retirement gift for my high school music teacher, whose lessons were inspirational preludes to my own study of music. In mood and phrasing it echoes some well-known Debussy preludes. I would like to offer special thanks to Tali Morgulis, Assistant Professor at the University of Houston Moores School of Music, for graciously agreeing to perform this evening on short notice.

– Note by the composer

Karim Al-Zand is a Lynette S. Autrey Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Composition at The Shepherd School of Music.

Dear Miss Lia Kurt Stallmann

Dear Miss Lia is a work-in-progress. It will eventually be a part of a longer, concert length work that looks at contemporary American life. Since the age of three, my daughter Lia has been receiving credit card applications in the mail. Now at age seven, she can actually read them. It in-

terests me that she can understand the enticing messages in the letters but doesn't yet fully understand the "fine print." As a father/daughter project, Lia and I recorded parts of these letters for tonight's performance.

— Note by the composer

Kurt Stallmann is currently a Lynette S. Autrey Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Composition at The Shepherd School of Music and Director of REMLABS, the electronic and computer music facility at Rice University.

Cavany Trio Joan Tower

Trio Cavany was commissioned by La Jolla Music Festival, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and the Virginia Arts Festival. The title covers the three states in which these three festivals are located. The work is dedicated to violinist Cho-Liang Lin, who gave the premiere in the summer of 2007 at the La Jolla festival with cellist Gary Hoffman and pianist André-Michel Schub. In one movement about eighteen minutes long, **Trio Cavany** features all three instruments in solo and in combination.

— Note by the composer

BIOGRAPHY

Hailed as "one of the most successful woman composers of all time" in The New Yorker magazine, JOAN TOWER was the first woman to receive the Grawemeyer Award in Composition in 1990. She was inducted in 1998 into the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Letters, and in 2004 into the Academy of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University.

She was the first composer chosen for the ambitious new Ford Made in America commissioning program, a collaboration of the League of American Orchestras (at that time, the American Symphony Orchestra League) and Meet the Composer. In October 2005, the Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra presented the world premiere of Tower's fifteen-minute orchestral piece **Made in America**. The work went on to performances in every state in the Union during the 2005-07 seasons.

The Nashville Symphony and conductor Leonard Slatkin recorded **Made in America**, **Tambor**, and **Concerto for Orchestra** for the Naxos label. The top-selling recording won three 2008 Grammy awards: Best Classical Contemporary Composition, Best Classical Album, and Best Orchestral Performance. Tower has added conducting to her list of accomplishments, with engagements at the American Symphony, the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, the Scotia Festival Orchestra, the Anchorage Symphony, the Kalisto Chamber Orchestra, and another eight of the Made in America orchestras, among others.

Since 1972, Tower has taught at Bard College, where she is Asher Edelman Professor of Music. This year she concluded her ten-year tenure as composer-in-residence with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, a title she has held at the Deer Valley Festival in Utah since 1998 as well as at the Yale/Norfolk Chamber Music Festival for eight years. Other accolades include the 1998 Delaware Symphony's Alfred I. DuPont Award for Distinguished American Composer, the 2002 Annual Composer's Award from the Lancaster Symphony

(Pennsylvania), and an Honorary Degree from the New England Conservatory (2006). "Tower has truly earned a place among the most original and forceful voices in modern American music" (The Detroit News).

Among her recent premieres are **DNA**, a percussion quintet commissioned for Frank Epstein and the New England Conservatory Percussion Ensemble, and her third string quartet **Incandescent**, for the Emerson String Quartet. The Emerson Quartet embraced **Incandescent** and toured it throughout the world. The success of Tower's second string quartet, **In Memory**, premiered by the Tokyo String Quartet in 2002 at the 92nd Street Y, was a highlight of their tour of three continents. Her percussion concerto, **Strike Zones**, was performed at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center by Evelyn Glennie with the National Symphony Orchestra under Leonard Slatkin and was featured at Tanglewood in 2007. The Orpheus Chamber Orchestra commissioned and premiered **Chamber Dance** at Carnegie Hall in May 2006 and recently took it on their Korean and Japanese tour. In the spring of 2009, they will also perform it on their European tour. As part of her appointment as Season Composer for 2007-08 by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, **A Gift** for winds and piano was commissioned by Chamber Music Northwest and premiered by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center players Tara O'Connor, David Shifrin, William Purvis, Milan Turkovich, and Anne Marie McDermott in February 2008. Other premieres at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center included **Trio Cavany**, performed by Cho-Liang Lin, Gary Hoffman, and André Michel Schub, and **Simply Purple** for viola, performed by Paul Neubauer.

Joan Tower's compositions cross many genres: **Can I** (2007) for youth chorus and two percussionists; **Copperwave** (2006) written for the American Brass Quintet and commissioned by the Juilliard School of Music; **Fascinating Ribbons** (2001), her foray into the world of band music, premiered at the annual conference of College Band Directors; **Vast Antique Cubes/Throbbing Still** (2000), a solo piano piece for John Browning; **Big Sky** (2000), a piano trio premiered by David Finckel, Wu Han, and Chee-Yun; **Tambor** (1998) for the Pittsburgh Symphony under the baton of Mariss Jansons; and **Wild Purple** (1998) for violist Paul Neubauer. Tower's 1990 Grawemeyer Award-winning **Silver Ladders** was written during her 1985-88 St. Louis Symphony residency and was subsequently choreographed in 1998 by Helgi Tomasson and the San Francisco Ballet. Her 1993 ballet **Stepping Stones** was commissioned by choreographer Kathryn Posin for the Milwaukee Ballet.

Joan Tower's bold and energetic music, with its striking imagery and novel structural forms, has won large, enthusiastic audiences. From 1969 to 1984, she was pianist and founding member of the Naumburg Award-winning Da Capo Chamber Players, which commissioned and premiered many of her most popular works. Her first orchestral work, **Sequoia**, quickly entered the repertory, with performances by orchestras including St. Louis, New York, San Francisco, Minnesota, Tokyo NHK, Toronto, the National Symphony, and the London Philharmonia. A choreographed version by The Royal Winnipeg Ballet toured throughout Canada, Europe, and Russia. Tower's tremendously popular five **Fanfares for the Uncommon Woman** have been played by over 500 different ensembles. Joan Tower is published exclusively by Associated Music Publishers.

UPCOMING SYZYGY CONCERT

Friday, April 10

The international renowned performance group

Relâche Ensemble *from Philadelphia*

fuses the familiar sounds of our popular world

with the freshness and edge of the

experimental avant-garde.

Program to be announced.

8:00 p.m., Duncan Recital Hall

Free admission



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